



Get the Iron You Need

When You Are Pregnant, You Need More Iron.

Your body uses iron every day. So every day you need more iron. You need iron to make red blood cells. This keeps you and your baby healthy. When you don't get enough iron, your baby has a higher chance of being born too early or too small.

Here's how to get more iron.

Take prenatal vitamins with iron.

Eat more iron-rich food.

- Every day, eat three servings of animal products, like meat, fish, poultry, or eggs
- Eat foods high in iron and foods with vitamin C at the same time. This will help you use more of the iron from the food you eat.
- When you cook, use cast iron pots and pans

You may need to take extra iron.

- Ask your doctor about taking extra iron every day
- Take your iron pill at bedtime or between meals

When you take your iron pills:

- Do not drink milk at the same time
- Do not drink coffee, tea, or cola beverages at the same time
- Do not eat yogurt, cheese, or bran at the same time
- Do not use antacids

This will help your body take in more iron.

Eat more of these iron-rich foods:

These meats and shellfish are high in iron:

- Beef
- Dark turkey meat
- Cooked beef tongue
- Cooked oysters
- Cooked clams

Any cereal fortified with iron is high in iron.

- Read the label

These foods are good sources of iron:

- Lentils
- Navy beans
- Kidney beans
- Garbanzo beans
- Soybeans
- Black-eyed peas
- Pumpkin seeds
- Lima beans



Try these fruits and vegetables. They also have iron:

- Prunes
- Dried apricots
- Spinach
- Raisins

Eat iron rich foods along with foods high in vitamin C.

The vitamin C in food helps your body absorb more iron. Try these foods high in vitamin C:

- Oranges
- Lemons
- Grapefruits
- Broccoli
- Tomatoes
- Cabbage